

Reviewing Officer: Ken Arney, Southern Region Regional Forester

Time Zone of Reviewing Officers: Eastern Time

The Forest Service has received two eligible objections regarding the programmatic Plan Amendment for the Ozark-St. Francis National Forests Revised Land and Resource Management Plan of 2005 (Forest Plan) for bat conservation. The publication date of this notice in the Courier, the newspaper of record, initiates a 10-day period during which individuals or organizations who have commented on the plan in the past and have a particular interest in the resolution this objection may file a request to be an interested person, as described in 36 C.F.R. §219.57 and Forest Service Handbook (FSH) 1909.12, Section 51.65, and participate in meetings between the objectors and the Forest Service.

The Ozark-St. Francis Forest Plan Amendment and Environmental Assessment to Update Bat Conservation Practices were released on October 16, 2020. These documents are available for review on the Ozark-St. Francis National Forests' website:

<https://www.fs.usda.gov/project/?project=55628>. The documents are also available in printed copy by contacting Janine Book, Forest Environmental Coordinator, at (479) 964-7282 or [janine.book@usda.gov](mailto:janine.book@usda.gov).

Individuals and/or organizations who have commented in the past may submit an interested person request based on these issues; such requests will be forwarded to the Region 8, Southern Regional Office Reviewing Officer. Two eligible and timely objections for this programmatic plan amendment have been received from Gary Norman and Kent Bonar. The objections may be viewed online at <https://cara.ecosystem-management.org/Public/ReadingRoom?Project=55628>.

#### Interested Persons

The objection regulations at 36 C.F.R. § 219.57 and Forest Service policy outlined in the Land Management Planning Handbook (FSH 1909.12, Section 51.65) allow those individuals and entities who have previously submitted substantive formal comments and who request and are granted recognition as interested persons to participate in resolution meetings between the objectors and the Forest Service. The purpose of this opportunity is to ensure that efforts to resolve objections are conducted in an open and collaborative forum. Written requests for recognition as an interested person must be submitted no later than 10 days from the date of this notice in the Courier, the newspaper of record, and must include the following information: name and affiliation, if any, of the requester; mailing address, phone number, and email address (if available) for the requester; the names of the objector(s) whose objection(s) the requester has an interest in; a brief explanation of the requester's interest in the objection(s) and any specific concern(s), including a description of support or opposition to the objection(s); and identification of substantive formal comment provided by the requester during the planning process demonstrating the requester's participation in the planning process. Written requests should be mailed to: Ozark-St. Francis National Forests, Attn: Ken Arney, Reviewing Officer, Bat Plan Amendment Objections, 605 W. Main St, Russellville, AR 72802. Due to the current CoVID-19 pandemic, hand delivered requests will not be accepted at this time. Electronic requests must be submitted to [SM.FS.r8\\_ro\\_obj@usda.gov](mailto:SM.FS.r8_ro_obj@usda.gov). In electronic requests, the subject line must include "Ozark-St. Francis Bat Plan Amendment." An automated response will confirm that your electronic request has been received. Electronic requests must be submitted in a commonly used format such as an email message, plain text (.txt), rich text format (.rtf), or Microsoft Word (.docx).

The requests will be considered by the Reviewing Officer(s), and eligible interested persons will be notified in advance of any objection resolution meetings. Objection resolution meetings are open to observation by the public, and the date, location, and agenda for any meeting will be posted online at

<https://www.fs.usda.gov/project/?project=55628>. This legal published in The Courier on 1/15/21.